

In the claims:

For the Examiner's convenience, all pending claims are presented below with changes shown. Please cancel claims 5-7, 15, 16 and 24 without prejudice.

1-3. Cancelled

4. (Currently Amended) A network comprising:  
one or more stations implementing a Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP);  
a network firewall coupled to the first station; and  
a public proxy/gatekeeper (PPG), coupled to the firewall ~~router, to masquerade~~  
~~un-translated IP addresses received from the one or more stations via the firewall~~  
including:  
a masquerade module to translate private IP addresses received from each  
of the one or more stations to a public address associated with a private network  
to which the one or more stations are coupled by comparing an IP address  
embedded within a data portion of each received packet to a source IP address in  
a header of each received packet and masquerading the IP address if the  
embedded IP address does not match the source IP address.

5-7 (Cancelled)

8. (Currently Amended) The network of claim 4 ~~5~~ wherein the PPG further  
comprises a port assignment module to assign a dedicated port to each of the one or more  
stations to implement VOIP communications from behind the firewall.

9. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 8 wherein the port assignment

2 module calculates an index value used to assign the dedicated port for each of the one or  
3 more stations.

1 10. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 9 wherein the index value is  
2 calculated by assigning a value corresponding to the number of stations coupled behind  
3 the firewall.

1 11. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 9 wherein the index value is  
2 calculated by assigning a value corresponding to the least significant byte of the private  
3 IP address associated with each of the one or more stations.

1 12. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 9 wherein the PPG further  
2 comprises a registration module to receive a media access control (MAC) address for  
3 each of the one more stations during a registration phase.

1 13. (Previously Presented) The network of claim 12 wherein the registration  
2 module transmits an index value to each of the one or more stations to confirm  
3 registration.

1 14. (Previously Presented) A public proxy/gatekeeper (PPG) comprising a  
2 masquerade module to translate private IP addresses received from one or more Voice  
3 Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) stations to a public address associated with a private  
4 network to which the one or more stations are coupled by comparing an IP address  
5 embedded within a data portion of each received packet to a source IP address in a header  
6 of each received packet and masquerading the IP address if the embedded IP address does  
7 not match the source IP address.

1 15. (Cancelled)

1 16. (Cancelled)

1 17. (Previously Presented) The PPG of claim 14 further comprising a port  
2 assignment module to assign a dedicated port to each of the one or more stations to  
3 implement VOIP communications from behind a firewall coupled to the one or more  
4 stations.

1 18. (Previously Presented) The PPG of claim 17 wherein the port assignment  
2 module calculates an index value used to assign the dedicated port for each of the one or  
3 more stations.

1 19. (Previously Presented) The PPG of claim 18 wherein the index value is  
2 calculated by assigning a value corresponding to the number of stations coupled behind  
3 the firewall.

1 20. (Previously Presented) The PPG of claim 18 wherein the index value is  
2 calculated by assigning a value corresponding to the least significant byte of a private IP  
3 address associated with each of the one or more stations.

1 21. (Previously Presented) The PPG of claim 18 further comprising a  
2 registration module to receive a media access control (MAC) address for each of the one  
3 more stations during a registration phase.

1 22. (Previously Presented) The PPG of claim 21 wherein the registration  
2 module transmits an index value to each of the one or more stations to confirm

3 registration.

1 23. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:  
2 receiving data at a public proxy/gatekeeper (PPG) from a station implementing a  
3 Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP); and  
4 comparing an IP address embedded within a data portion of a data packet received  
5 from the station to a source IP address in a header portion of the data packet; and  
6 translating the a private IP address received from the station to a public address  
7 associated with a private network to which the station is coupled.

1 24. (Cancelled)

1 25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23 further comprising  
2 assigning a dedicated port to the stations.

1 26. (Withdrawn) A network comprising:  
2 a network firewall; and  
3 a station implementing Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP), coupled to the  
4 firewall, to transmit dummy packets to the firewall at predetermined intervals to maintain  
5 open ports behind the firewall to enable call signaling from devices external to the  
6 firewall.

1 27. (Withdrawn) The network of claim 26 wherein the station comprises a heartbeat  
2 generator to transmit the dummy packets upon a counter reaching the predetermined  
3 interval.

1 28. (Withdrawn) The network of claim 27 wherein the station further comprises a

2 port assignment module to assign a dedicated port to the station.

1 29. (Withdrawn) The network of claim 28 wherein the dedicated port is assigned by  
2 adding an index value received from a proxy/gatekeeper (PPG) to a base port value.

1 30. (Withdrawn) The network of claim 28 wherein the dedicated port is assigned by  
2 adding the least significant byte of a private IP address of the station to a base port value.

1 31. (Withdrawn) The network of claim 26 further comprising:  
2 an audio CODEC to encode and decode audio data at the station; and  
3 a video CODEC to encode and decode video data at the station.

1 32. (Withdrawn) Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) station comprising a  
2 heartbeat generator to transmit dummy packets to a network firewall at predetermined  
3 intervals to maintain an open port behind the firewall to enable call signaling from  
4 devices external to the firewall.

1 33. (Withdrawn) The station of claim 32 wherein the heartbeat generator transmits  
2 the dummy packets upon a counter reaching the predetermined interval.

1 34. (Withdrawn) The station of claim 33 further comprising a port assignment  
2 module to assign a dedicated port to the station.

1 35. (Withdrawn) The station of claim 34 wherein the dedicated port is assigned by  
2 adding an index value received from a proxy/gatekeeper (PPG) to a base port value.

1 36. (Withdrawn) The station of claim 34 wherein the dedicated port is assigned by  
2 adding the least significant byte of a private IP address of the station to a base port value.

- 1 37. (Withdrawn) The station of claim 32 further comprising:
- 2 an audio CODEC to encode and decode audio data at the station; and
- 3 a video CODEC to encode and decode video data at the station.